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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 17-03-2025

NATIONAL NEWS

Walmart-Owned Indus Appstore Partners with Xiaomi India

Indus Appstore, owned by Walmart-backed PhonePe, has announced a multi-year alliance with Xiaomi India to pre-install its app marketplace on all Xiaomi devices sold in India.

As part of the deal, Xiaomi will replace its existing app store, GetApps, with Indus Appstore on current devices.

Xiaomi India partnered to pre-install Indus Appstore on all new devices.

It aims to challenge Google Play Store by offering an alternative app marketplace.

The deal strengthens Indus Appstore's presence, making it the default app store for millions of Xiaomi users.

Indian Railways Joins Mission Amrit Sarovar to Enhance Water Conservation

The Indian Railways has been integrated into the Union Government's Mission Amrit Sarovar, launched in April 2022, to combat water scarcity and enhance groundwater recharge across India.

The initiative focuses on the construction and rejuvenation of 75 ponds per district, emphasizing community participation (Jan Bhagidari) and climate resilience.

By October 2024, over 68,000 ponds had been restored.

In Phase 2, the Indian Railways will play a critical role in desilting, excavating, and constructing water bodies near railway lines, while using the excavated material for railway embankments.

Tamil Nadu Replaces ₹ with '□□' in State Budget Logo

The Tamil Nadu government has replaced the Indian Rupee symbol (₹) with the Tamil letter '□□' in the state budget logo for FY 2025-26.

This decision, led by Chief Minister M K Stalin, is seen as a cultural assertion and aligns with the state's long-standing opposition to Hindi imposition and the National Education Policy (NEP).

The Tamil Nadu budget logo now features '□□' instead of the standard Rupee symbol (₹).

The move emphasizes Tamil identity and aims to promote linguistic pride.

The decision reflects Tamil Nadu's resistance to the perceived Hindi imposition.

It aligns with the state's stance against the National Education Policy (NEP), which is considered "saffronized" by the ruling DMK government.

Prime Minister Modi To Inaugurate 10th Edition Of Raisina Dialogue

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 10th edition of Raisina Dialogue 2025 in New Delhi.

Prime Minister of New Zealand, Christopher Luxon, will join the inaugural session as the Chief Guest.

The theme this year is "Kālachakra – People, Peace and Planet". During the event, decision makers and thought leaders of the world will engage each other across conversations in various formats, over six thematic pillars.

The 10th Raisina Dialogue will witness participation of representatives from about 125 countries.

The participants include Ministers, former Heads of State and Heads of Government, Military Commanders, Captains of Industry, Technology Leaders, Academics, Journalists, Scholars on Strategic Affairs, Experts from leading Think Tanks, and Youth.

Over 3500 participants will be joining the Dialogue in-person, and the proceedings will be viewed by millions across the world on various digital platforms.

The Raisina Dialogue is India's premier conference on geopolitics and geoeconomics committed to addressing the most challenging issues facing the global community.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India Participates in United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

The Government of India, led by Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Smt. Annpurna Devi, actively participated in the 69th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) at the UN Headquarters, New York (March 10-21, 2025).

India emphasized its commitment to gender equality, inclusive development, and international cooperation for women's empowerment.

It addressed 12 critical areas of concern under the Beijing Platform for Action.

It highlighted India's flagship schemes for women's health, nutrition, education, and economic empowerment.

It also reaffirmed India's commitment to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

BANKING

Digital Transformation Award 2025

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today commended the Reserve Bank of India for being selected for the Digital Transformation Award 2025 by Central Banking, London, UK.

Mr. Modi said this accomplishment reflects an emphasis towards innovation and efficiency in governance.

He added that Digital innovation continues to strengthen India’s financial ecosystem and empower countless lives.

DEFENCE

India-Bangladesh Naval Exercise ‘Bongosagar 2025’

The India-Bangladesh Naval Exercise ‘Bongosagar 2025’ and the Coordinated Patrol were conducted in the Bay of Bengal.

The exercise aimed to enhance interoperability between the two navies, strengthening their ability to respond collaboratively to maritime security challenges.

It enhances coordination between the Indian Navy and Bangladesh Navy.

It also strengthens maritime security cooperation and improves tactical planning, coordination, and information sharing.

Indian Navy INS Ranvir and Bangladesh Navy BNS Abu Ubaidah participated in the exercise.

AWARDS & PRIZES

2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award

The 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award, often referred to as the "Nobel Prize in Computing," has been awarded to Andrew G. Barto (University of Massachusetts, Amherst) and Richard S. Sutton (University of Alberta) for their pioneering contributions to Reinforcement Learning (RL).

Their work has significantly shaped the foundations of AI and machine learning.

The prize money is sponsored by Google.

Key Achievements include Development of Temporal Difference Learning, Advances in Policy-Gradient Methods and Integration of Neural Networks in RL.

RL is a learning paradigm where an agent learns optimal behaviors by receiving rewards for its actions in an uncertain environment.

Major Contributions of Barto & Sutton

Temporal Difference Learning:

Developed methods to solve reward prediction problems in dynamic environments.

Policy-Gradient Methods:

Introduced techniques for optimizing decision-making policies in RL.

Combining Learning & Planning:

Developed algorithms that integrate learning with planning, improving adaptability.

Influence on Deep Reinforcement Learning:

Their work laid the foundation for modern AI breakthroughs such as:

AlphaGo (by DeepMind).

ChatGPT and other generative AI models.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

ICICI Bank Appoints Kamal Wali as Head of Security Operations Center

ICICI Bank has appointed Kamal Wali as the Head of its Security Operations Center (SOC), reinforcing its commitment to cybersecurity and risk mitigation.

With over 18 years of experience in cybersecurity and IT operations, Wali will play a crucial role in strengthening the bank’s digital security infrastructure.

Primary Responsibilities include Overseeing security operations to combat evolving cyber threats and Strengthening cybersecurity infrastructure for digital resilience.

SPORTS

Hockey India Senior Women National Champion

Hockey Jharkhand defeated the defending champion Hockey Haryana in the final to win the 15th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship 2025.

The final match was played at the Tau Devi Lal Complex in Panchkula, Haryana.

Hockey Mizoram defeated Hockey Maharashtra to take the third spot with Hockey Maharashtra at the fourth position.

Defending champion Hockey Haryana entered the final by defeating Hockey Maharashtra in the semifinal, while Jharkhand entered the final by defeating Mizoram.

Hockey India organised the 15th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship 2025 at Tau Devi Lal Complex in Panchkula, Haryana, from 1-12 March 2025.

In the new format, the Division A matches were played in a knock-out format. Twelve teams participated in the Division A of the 15th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Consumer Rights Day

World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated on 15th March 2025.

World Consumer Rights Day was inspired by President John F Kennedy, who sent a special message to the US Congress on 15th March 1962, in which he formally addressed the issue of consumer rights.

He was the first world leader to do so.

The consumer movement first marked that date in 1983 and now uses the day every year to mobilize action on important issues and campaigns

OBITUARY

Former Indian All-Rounder Syed Abid Ali

Syed Abid Ali, a former Indian all-rounder, passed away at the age of 83 in the United States.

He was born in Hyderabad. Abid Ali made a name for himself as a dependable all-rounder in Indian

cricket.

He was known for his ability to swing the ball, bat sensibly in the lower order, and was one of the most agile fielders of his time.

Abid Ali made his Test debut against Australia in Brisbane, where he immediately showcased his bowling prowess.

In his first-ever Test match, he claimed six wickets for 55 runs, a remarkable feat that announced his arrival on the international stage.

In the same Australia series, he displayed his batting skills at Sydney, scoring two gritty half-centuries (78 and 81), proving his worth as a complete all-rounder.

His ability to contribute in both departments made him an invaluable asset to the Indian team.

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